

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
20 January 2005 (20.01.2005)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2005/006762 A2

(51) International Patent Classification⁷:

H04N 7/26

(21) International Application Number:

PCT/EP2004/051325

(22) International Filing Date: 1 July 2004 (01.07.2004)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
0315412.7 2 July 2003 (02.07.2003) GB

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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— without international search report and to be republished upon receipt of that report

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

WO 2005/006762 A2

(54) Title: OPTICAL FLOW ESTIMATION METHOD

(57) Abstract: The optical flow in an image is estimated using only parameters extracted directly from a compressed video data stream, substantially eliminating the need to decode the video data stream for this purpose. Coefficients extracted from the compressed video data stream are used to establish a confidence map indicative of the edge strength within the image data and hence the accuracy of the associated motion field. A smooth motion field is generated from the motion vectors inherent in the compressed video data stream. The motion field is then used to update the confidence map between frames, providing an estimate of the optical flow.